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Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana and KaBOOM! Put Kids First By Increasing Opportunities to Play in Missoula

200 Community Volunteers Unite to Build a New Playground at Memorial Rose Garden Park

Volunteers from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana (BCBSMT), Missoula Parks and Recreation, the Rose Park Neighborhood and the community will join [KaBOOM!](#) on Saturday, August 17 to construct a kid-designed, state-of-the-art playground in just six hours at Memorial Rose Garden Park, 800 Brooks St. The new playground will help make play the easy choice for kids and families in Missoula. Residents may sign up to volunteer at <https://roseparkplayground.eventbrite.com>.

Play is essential to physical, creative, cognitive, social and emotional development. The project will replace the park's aging, outdated play equipment and will increase the playground's capacity, play value and accessibility. Through this project, the City of Missoula will work with BCBSMT and KaBOOM! to make a difference in their community and address the most urgent needs of kids. KaBOOM! is a national non-profit dedicated to giving kids the childhood they deserve through great, safe places to play.

In July, local kids came together to draw their dream playground at a Design Workshop hosted by KaBOOM! The playground is based off their drawings and will provide thousands Missoula kids with a great, safe place to play over its lifetime.

This playground is part of a broader effort led by BCBSMT and KaBOOM! to ensure communities have great PLAYces for kids and families. Through this partnership, KaBOOM! and BCBSMT are creating an oasis where kids feel valued and loved, and where their potential is supported, nurtured and celebrated. This project will be the sixth playground build led by BCBSMT.

The total project cost is estimated at \$125,000, with about 80 percent funded by BCBSMT. The remaining \$25,000 is funded by the City's capital improvement program and park impact fees from development. For more information, visit Missoula Parks and Recreation at www.missoulaparks.org.

Event Schedule and Volunteer Info on page 2

(more)

WHEN: **Saturday, August 17**

8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Kick-off ceremony
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Best viewing of playground construction
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Final construction phase
2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Ribbon-cutting ceremony
(Times approximate)

WHERE: **Memorial Rose Garden Park, 800 Brooks St., Missoula**

WHO: Hundreds of community volunteers
City officials
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana officials

VOLUNTEER: <https://roseparkplayground.eventbrite.com>

- Volunteers must be 18 or older. On construction day, they will assemble play equipment, mix concrete, move mulch, etc.
- Build Day is happening—regardless of weather! Come prepared for the sun or rain, in comfortable clothes that can get dirty or stained with paint. Closed-toe shoes only, please.
- No construction experience necessary, all abilities welcome!
- Youth games and activities provided all day by Parks & Recreation Staff!
- We'll provide breakfast, lunch, and plenty of water. Gloves and other materials will also be provided for the projects that need them.

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About Missoula Parks and Recreation

Missoula Parks and Recreation provides places, programs and services essential to our quality of life; reflects community values; fosters a sense of place, and develops and preserves infrastructure and lands that are critical to supporting a healthy community. Learn more at www.missoulaparks.org.

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana (BCBSMT) is a division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company and Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. BCBSMT is the largest and longest-standing statewide, customer-owned health insurer and full-service health benefits administrator in Montana. BCBSMT has provided high-quality health insurance plans and administrative services to Montanans for nearly 80 years. BCBSMT is committed to ensuring its members — no matter where they are on the health spectrum — achieve maximum health. For more information about BCBSMT, visit www.bcbsmt.com.

About KaBOOM!

KaBOOM! is the national non-profit dedicated to giving all kids – especially those living in poverty – the childhood they deserve through great, safe places to play. KaBOOM! inspires communities to make play the easy choice and works to drive the national discussion about the importance of PLAYces. KaBOOM! has collaborated with partners to build or improve more than 17,000 play spaces, engage over 1.5 million volunteers and serve nearly 10 million kids. To learn why play matters for all kids, visit kaboom.org and join the conversation at twitter.com/kaboom, facebook.com/kaboom and instagram.com/kaboom. #playmatters #PLAYceforKids